

WISCONSIN RIVER RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

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MEMBER COUNTIES: CRAWFORD • DANE • GRANT • IOWA • ROCK • SAUK • WALWORTH • WAUKESHA

DRAFT WRRTC MINUTES

X-Com – Friday July 10th, 2009, 10:00am, Dane County Hwy Garage, 2302 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison, WI

1. Karl Nilson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Commissioners present for all or part of the meeting:

Crawford	Tom Cornford		X
	Kersten Rocksvold		X
	Vacant		
Dane	Gene Gray		X
	Jim Haefs-Flemming		X
	Forrest Van Schwartz		X
Grant	DuWayne Carlin		
	Margaret Ruf		X
	Robert Scallon		X
Iowa	Charles Anderson		X
	Gerald Dorscheid		X
	Joe Thomas		

Rock	Ben Coopman	(alternate)	
	Katie Kuznacic		X
	Alan Sweeney		X
	Terry Thomas		
Sauk	Joel Gaalswijk		
	Rob Sinklair	(alternate)	
	Halsey Sprecher	Resigned	
	Larry Volz		X
Walworth	Jerry Grant		
	Richard Kuhnke		X
	Allan Polyock		X
Waukesha	Karl Nilson		X
	Richard Manke		
	Fritz Ruf		

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

Amy Seeboth (SWWRPC / WRRTC Administrator); Frank Huntington (WisDOT); Ben Meighan (WSOR); Jim Matzinger (Dane County Hwy CPA / WRRTC Accountant); Roger Larson (WisDOT)

3. **Motion accepting Seeboth's certification of Public Notice** - Dorscheide / Cornford / passed unanimously.
4. **Motion accepting the Agenda, prepared by Seeboth.** Kuhnke / Volz / Change: Move agenda item 9 to 8, item 15 should read "High Speed Rail Milwaukee to Madison" and item 16 changed to Cross Plains/Spring Green / passed unanimously.
5. **Motion approving the draft June Minutes** - G. Gray / Van Schwartz / passed unanimously
6. **Public Comment** – None
7. **Correspondence & Communications** –Nilson provided Seeboth with his re-appointment. Seeboth reported on a communication she exchanged with the V. Muscoda over maintaining weeds along the tracks. She notified them that WSOR does routine weed control and the Village is welcome to do any weed management beyond that. WRRTC received a response from Herb Kohl RE their letter on the proposed anti-trust legislation. WRRTC received a letter from WSOR RE the requested ATV crossing (discussed in item 16).

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. **Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Report on Operations** – Ken Lucht from WSOR reported on maintenance activities: A number of bridge issues have come up since rail detection ended. Biggest issue is Prairie Du Chien bridge taken out of service on July 1st. Rail was out of alignment by about 6 inches because of one way loaded traffic (grain cars out of Boscobel heading east). Last Thursday, WSOR swarmed all of their crews out there. He believes that that on Wednesday of this week the bridge is back in service. WSOR feels that this fixing will hold bridge together for a couple more years, but will keep an eye on it. Bridge on west side of cross plains that they have been working on – funded by Wis., counties and WSOR. This is almost complete; they have hired a contractor to install pilings. WSOR

has also been weed spraying. They hired a professional contractor to run a truck along corridors. Sprays 5-6 feet outside of the rails. Resources for rail are limited right now, but WSOR feels that weed spraying is a priority to help protect rail from breakage.

2009 capital projects- Continue on welded rail from Milton to Madison, WSOR is likely to not finish it this year, but will continue in 2010. They intend to do a lot of crossing reconstruction this year. Hopefully working cooperatively with Dane County on these crossings. They also plan to do some crossing renewal between Milwaukee and slinger. Perhaps biggest project this year – 11 miles of rail restoration to Sheboygan County from Plymouth to Sheboygan falls – money in State budget for this. 2 major shippers in this County want rail service by October. Upwards of 1,000 people would be employed as part of this project. Rail is critical for these businesses. Solely funded by State and private sources. In 2010 WSOR hopes to 1) Finish Madison to Milton, 2) Probably do a project on northern division, 3) Probably install 40,000 ties between Madison and Monroe, 4) Probably head west on Prairie du Chien sub. WSOR is scheduling a presentation right now, a joint meeting of transit commissions – will show a 24 minute dvd documentary on WSOR and they want to get this video to everyone on the transit commission. The presentation will probably will be in Madison, when the date is decided WSOR will send notices & invites. Invites can be extended to anyone who wants to learn more about WSOR.

9. **WRRTC Financial Report** – Jim Matzinger, Dane County CPA / WRRTC Accountant, distributed copies of the Treasurer's Report and provided an overview.
 - **Motion approving Treasurer's Report and payment of bills as presented** - Van Schwartz / Anderson / passed unanimously.
10. **WRRTC Administrator's Report** – Amy Seebth, SWWRPC Trans. Planner had no new updates other than what is included in the agenda.
11. **WisDOT Update** – Frank Huntington (WISDOT) reported that the new State Budget included a large amount of money for rail projects. This will allow WisDOT to do normal rehabilitation projects as well as open the Sheboygan line and possibly a line from Monroe west to Shullsburg (economic impact statement on this line is still being created, this would be the first rail to trail project put back into lines). WisDOT already received more applications for this year than money is available. A property in Janesville is in the process of being acquired. \$7-8 mil of the \$60 in the State budget will probably go to acquisitions.

Huntington has not been able to find out anything about the Sauk Prairie bridge question that arose in last month's meeting. He did mention that WisDOT has been working with Village of Avoca and other groups on the flooding situation there. They have been flooded out fairly frequently. Avoca is pointing to rail bridge as a cause of the flooding. WisDOT engineers say that cleaning the bridge won't fix the problem, but that it should be done and will help somewhat. WisDOT is looking into cleaning out highway and rail road bridges. Village is looking into possibly building a dyke. Anderson pointed out that ground saturation is a main problem here, not the rush of water necessarily. Lucht pointed out that the army corp of engineers developed a plan for Avoca years ago. Huntington said the dyke is part of the identified solutions of this plan. Main proposal was to create a 200 foot wide stream channel, which is pretty significant. Other proposals are being explored. DNR is recommending mitigation – moving the Village out of the stream bed. Village is resistant so far to relocation.
12. **Update on permits for** demolition of structures on WRRTC property in Arena, WI – Seebth reported that everything should be final. Brownlee (WRRTC's Legal Council) finalized the contract. There is no written agreement that the Village will help pay for the flagger- the contract is written that the Contractor will bear the cost of flagger beyond that which WSOR is providing.
 - **A motion was made to proceed with the contract as written**- Dorscheide / Van Schwartz / Passed Unanimously
13. **WRRTC Insurance with Richgels-Schaefer Agency Inc.** – Seebth
 - **Motion to approve Supplemental Insurance for up to 100 million with a \$15,553 and discuss Director & Officer Insurance Policy at August Meeting** – Sweeny / Scallon / passed unanimously.

14. AB314- Lucht reported on a bill that would further regulate herbicides and pesticides on rails throughout Wisconsin. Provision 1 - have a weed management plan in place by a certain date. Provision 2 - after a line has been sprayed, the rail has to be clear of all employees for 24 hours, effectively shutting down the rail line for that time and block crossings for 24 hours. 3rd provision creates an extra layer of government.

- **Motion to have Van Schwartz and Lucht draft letter of opposition to AB314, Sweeny, Kuznacic, and Seeboth review the letter. Seeboth send letter to Committee on Natural Resources prior to the hearing. Dorscheid / Gray / Passed Unanimously**

15. High Speed Rail Milwaukee to Madison – Van Schwartz and Huntington provided an update on the proposed high speed rail between Milwaukee and Madison. Van Schwartz is concerned that WRRTC needs a voice at the table; some of the proposed line uses WRRTC Infrastructure. Huntington said this project should have little to no affect on WRRTC- the WRRTC agreement is strictly freight. WSOR will be maintaining the track and will gain some operating benefit.

Haefs-Flemming left at 12:00

16. ATV Crossing Request in Cross Plains / Spring Green – Huntington reported on this crossing request; he confirmed that this is a private crossing and that it therefore falls under WRRTC's jurisdiction. WSOR mailed a letter opposing this action to all Commissioners. Lucht explained the letter. Van Schwartz added that little would be gained for WRRTC by this crossing. Cost of putting in crossing and liability costs would become very expensive. Gray asked how close the nearest public crossing is to this proposed crossing- Lucht didn't know exactly, but did know that 17 crossing are within 6 miles of this crossing. Volz requested that this be tabled, he spoke with the person who requested the crossing, and would like to go out to look at the proposed location before we make a decision.

- **Motion tabling this agenda item to the August Meeting** – Volz / Anderson – Passed with one opposition (Van Schwartz)

17. Darien – North Road Bridge Update – Huntington provided an update on the existing bridge in Darien. There is no ownership over repairs (is it the rail or the town?). The bridge has been out of service for about 1.5 years, it is currently not useable. WisDOT has offered to fund these bridge repairs under the local bridge program. This won't happen until 2010 though at earliest. 20% match could be funded by rail, township. Town approached WisDOT about acquiring the bridge to fix it with their own funds. Lucht added that WSOR has petitioned to permanently close this bridge and is encouraging commission to hold a hearing on this. Huntington said there is no need for the commission to take action on this at this time.

18. PRTC & SCWRTC Hoesly Memorial – Seeboth reported on a memorial that both PRTC and SCWRTC is holding next week to honor a long-time Commissioner to these RTC's.

- **Motion that WRRTC create a resolution honoring Robert Hoesly as well** – Anderson / Dorscheide – Passed Unanimously

19. Motion adjourning the meeting at 12:27 a.m. - Scallon / Cornford / passed unanimously.